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E.O. 12958: DECL: 04/21/2021

TAGS: PREL CH CB

SUBJECT: PRC/CAMBODIA: MFA GIVES ADDITIONAL DETAILS ON PREMIER WEN'S VISIT TO CAMBODIA

REF: PHNOM PENH 00696

Classified By: Political External Unit Chief Edgard Kagan. Reasons 1.4 (b/d).

¶1. (C) MFA Asian Affairs Division Director for Burma, Cambodia, Laos and Vietnam Chen Dehai's April 20 readout to Poloff of Premier Wen's April 7-8 visit to Cambodia tracked closely with reftel. While calling the trip a "full success," Chen admitted that much of the results touted by the leaders and the media were actually repackaging of the status quo or previous announcements. The most important result was the Joint Communique to establish a Comprehensive Partnership of Cooperation, but Chen said that it contained no new initiatives, although it was "good for the leaders' ears." The agreement for China to provide USD 200 million in low interest loans and preferential buyer's credit actually represented the implementation of assistance announced two years ago. Wen and Hun Sen set a goal of boosting bilateral trade by US\$1 billion by 2010. However, considering bilateral trade was only US\$560 million in 2005, Chen doubted the goal could be achieved, saying "there is a long way to go." Chen said China will continue to support APEC membership for Cambodia, even while it recognized that the APEC "had already closed the door" on Cambodia.

¶2. (C) Chen said the eleven accords signed during the visit included MOU's on health cooperation and the Cambodia section of the Greater Mekong Sub-Region superhighway, as well as an agreement to start the second phase of a joint project to protect Angkor Wat.

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